

## U.S. COPYRIGHT OFFICE LEADERSHIP | APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT



### **Maria A. Pallante**

#### **Register of Copyrights and Director**

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington has appointed Maria A. Pallante as the 12th Register of Copyrights and director of the United States Copyright Office, effective **June 1, 2011**. Pallante served as the Acting Register for five months, following the retirement of Marybeth Peters on December 31, 2010.

In announcing his decision, Billington stressed the increasingly important role of copyright law in the current knowledge economy and the numerous complex issues facing copyright owners as well as users of copyrighted materials. He noted the particular challenges of protecting authors' intellectual-property interests in the online environment and achieving meaningful exceptions and limitations that serve the public interest in the 21st century.

*"Maria's background and experience make her an ideal choice to lead the Copyright Office at this time," Billington said. "She is a thoughtful civil servant, a proven and effective manager, a leader in the wider copyright community and a recognized expert in domestic and international copyright law."*

Pallante was tapped for the post following an extensive consultation and search process that began last year. The Librarian interviewed an impressive pool of candidates from the government, private sector and academia. Dozens of organizations and individuals from a broad spectrum of viewpoints were invited to meet with the Librarian's Office, to express the personal and professional qualities that they consider important in the position of the Register and the issues likely to require the attention of the Copyright Office in coming years.

In making the appointment, Billington commended the high regard for Pallante among Copyright Office stakeholders from multinational businesses to individual citizens, and her understanding of the role that the Copyright Office plays within the mission of the Library of Congress. Billington noted that "During her tenure as Acting Register, she has managed a workforce of nearly 500 people and handled a series of extraordinary challenges relating to technology, staffing and budgets." Pallante has had wide-ranging experience in copyright transactions, policy and litigation, in both the government and private sectors. In addition to Acting Register, she has held several

key positions within the Copyright Office: Associate Register for Policy and International Affairs (2008-2010), Deputy General Counsel (2007-2008), and Policy Advisor (1996-1997). She spent much of her career in New York, working there from 1999-2007 as intellectual property counsel and director of the licensing group for the worldwide Guggenheim Museums, where she advised on programmatic and business initiatives related to publishing, product development and branding. She has led two national author organizations, working as Executive Director of the National Writers Union (1993-1995) and as Assistant Director of the Authors Guild (1991-1993), and was associate counsel at the Washington-based law firm and literary agency, Lichtman, Trister, Singer and Ross.

Pallante is a 1990 graduate of the George Washington University Law School. She earned her bachelor's degree in history from Misericordia University, where she was also awarded an honorary doctorate of humane letters. She completed a clerkship in administrative law under the Hon. G. Marvin Bober, appellate division, U.S. Department of Labor. During her career, Pallante has been a frequent speaker on copyright law at events in the United States and abroad, and has testified before Congress several times, including on the Copyright Reform Act (1993); Orphan Works (2006) and Online Enforcement of Rogue Websites (2011). She was a member of the Librarian's 1993 Advisory Committee on Copyright Registration and Deposit and is currently serving on the Department of Education's Advisory Commission on Accessible Instructional Materials in Post-Secondary Education for Students with Disabilities.

*"I am honored by the appointment and by Dr. Billington's trust in me," Pallante said. "I look forward to working with the talented staff of the Copyright Office and Library of Congress to set a path for the future, and I will look to engage and partner with my colleagues in the copyright community in as many ways as possible."*

The U.S. Copyright Office has been part of the Library of Congress since 1870. The Library is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution and the main repository of American authorship. Millions of books, songs, films and other creative works have been added to the Library's unequalled collection of American creativity through the copyright registration system.

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## ABOUT THE USCO

Congress created the Copyright Office in 1897 as a separate department of the Library of Congress. The Register of Copyrights serves by appointment of, and under the general direction of, the Librarian of Congress. Congress enacted the first federal Copyright Act in 1790 in accordance with Article 1, section 8 of the United States Constitution, "to promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries."